

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Grover Pettes

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Pettes, Grover, 1925-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Grover Pettes,
Dates:	July 22, 2019
Bulk Dates:	2019
Physical Description:	8 uncompressed MOV digital video files (3:45:54).
Abstract:	Nonprofit executive Grover L. Pettes, Sr. (1925-) served as president of the Community Cemetery in Las Cruces, the only burial site for African Americans in Las Cruces. Pettes was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on July 22, 2019, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2019_054
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Nonprofit president Grover Lee Pettes, Sr. was born on December 10, 1925 in Las Cruces, New Mexico to Robert A. Pettes and Ella C. Pettes. He attended Booker T. Washington School and also worked on his family's farm which was purchased by his father in 1939. In 1974, Pettes received his G.E.D. from Dona Ana Branch Community College.

In 1949, Pettes joined the Shook Tire Company as a tire recapper. Three years later, he moved to El Centro, California to serve as shop foreman of McNeese & McNeese, a Goodyear distributor. In 1955, Pettes began working as a repairman for the United States Air Force and the White Sands Proving Ground in Las Cruces, New Mexico. He returned to the car detailing business in 1958 to serve as owner and operator of A-1 Car Wash, Polish, and Paint. In 1960, Pettes was elected president of the Dona Ana County branch of the NAACP, a position that he held for five years. In 1963, Pettes founded the Mesa Development Center, a small water utility on the East Mesa, from property that once served as his family's farm. From 1964 to 1985, Pettes served as a painter and plumber for the United States Air Force and as a fire alarm systems specialist for the Holloman Air Force Base. Later, Pettes became president of the Community Cemetery's board of directors, the only burial site for African Americans in Las Cruces. The cemetery was first purchased in 1938 with the help of Pettes' uncle, and the first person to be buried there in 1940 was Pettes' grandmother, Annie Pettes Franklin. As president of the Community Cemetery, Pettes led the effort to restore and preserve the cemetery, which had been poorly maintained. In 2016, Pettes sold the Mesa Development Center to the city of Las Cruces.

Pettes served as president of the Booker T. Washington Elementary School Parent Teacher Association. He also served as a deacon and chairman at Bethel Second Baptist Church of Las Cruces. In 1984, Pettes received the Sustained Performance Award from the United States Air Force. In 2019, Pettes and his daughter Marilyn were panelists at the African American Museum and Cultural Center of New Mexico's exhibition "The Virtue of Ownership," where they discussed their family's history in Blackdom, New Mexico, the first all-African American settlement in the state.

Pettes and his wife, Laura Wright Pettes, have five children: Grover Pettes, Jr., Shirley Daniels, Dolores Webb, Steven Pettes, and Marilyn Hill.

Grover L. Pettes, Sr. was interviewed by *The History Makers* on July 22, 2019.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Grover Pettes was conducted by Larry Crowe on July 22, 2019, in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and was recorded on 8 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Nonprofit executive Grover L. Pettes, Sr. (1925-) served as president of the Community Cemetery in Las Cruces, the only burial site for African Americans in Las Cruces.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Pettes, Grover, 1925-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Pettes, Grover, 1925---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

Occupations:

Nonprofit Executive

HistoryMakers® Category:

CivicMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Grover Pettes, July 22, 2019. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Grover Pettes, Section A2019_054_001_001, TRT: 1:32:18 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Grover Pettes, Section A2019_054_001_002, TRT: 2:30:03 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Grover Pettes, Section A2019_054_001_003, TRT: 3:29:06 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Grover Pettes, Section A2019_054_001_004, TRT: 4:31:20 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Grover Pettes, Section A2019_054_001_005, TRT: 5:29:35 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Grover Pettes, Section A2019_054_001_006, TRT: 6:30:26 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Grover Pettes, Section A2019_054_001_007, TRT: 7:30:55 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Grover Pettes, Section A2019_054_001_008, TRT: 8:12:11 ?